

# By the King.

Orders decreed vpon for the furtherance of our seruice, aswell in writing, as riding in Poste; specially set downe, and commanded to be obserued, where our Posts are established within our Countie of Kent.



Orasmuch as amongst the sundry consultations and prouident cares taken for the maintenance of the quiet peace of the State, it hath not bene the least that our Predecessors heretofore, and the Counsell of this Realme haue had, to meete with the dangerous and secret intelligences of ill affected persons both at home and abroad, by the ouer-great liberty taken both in writing and riding in Poste, specially in and through our Countie of Kent, for the vsuall and frequent passage that way, falling out to and from all forraine parts beyond the Seas, the ground whereof still rising from disorders offered by certaine persons called Hackney-men, Tapsters, Hostlers and others in hiring out their horses, to the hinderance of publique seruice, danger to our State, and wrong to our standing and settled Postes in their seuerall Stages: Wee haue now thought it meete, with the aduise of our right trusty and welbeloued Cosins and Counsellers, *Robert Earle of Salisbury*, our high Treasurer of England, *Henry Earle of Northampton* our Lord Priue Seale, and Lord Warden of our Cinque Ports, and of our trustie and right welbeloued Counsellor, *John Lord Stanhope of Harrington*, our Vice-Chamberlaine, and Master of our Postes, to set downe and establish certaine Orders aswell for the Pacquet as *Thorough-Postes*, the due execution whereof

we likewise command and recommend to all Mayors, Portreeues, Bayliffes and other Head officers in the Cities, Townes and Ports of our said Countie of Kent, where the Stages of our standing Postes are now established and appointed, and to the Iustices of our Peace next residing, as they or any of them doe tender our Seruice, the safety of our State, and will answere the neglect or contempt hereof at their perils.

## Orders for the Pacquet.

First, that no Pacquets or Letters shall be sent by Poste, or bind any Poste to ride therewith in poste, but such as shall be directed first for our speciall affaires, and subscribed by the Writers name or Sender thereof: neither shall it be holden for our affaires, but as the same shall be directed and subscribed by our High Treasurer, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Lord Admirall, Principall Secretary of State, Lord Lieutenant of the said Countie, or Master of our Postes writing from the Court, or otherwise to the Court, subscribed by any Admirall, or Vice-admirall from the narrow Seas, Lieutenant of Douer Castle, or Mayor or his Deputy of any Port Towne, Ambassadors, or Agents beyond the Seas for the time being, or Deputie Lieutenant of our said Countie, writing to any of these personages aforesaid, or to the body of our Priue Counsell.

2 All Pacquets or Letters so directed shall be caried by the Postes in poste from Stage to Stage onely, and not otherwise nor further, being dated first on the outside by the Sender or writer, and afterwards by the Postes themselves, as they come to their hands, with the houre and place of their deliery, who shall runne therewith in Summer, viz. from the first of April, to the last of September, after 7. miles the houre, and 5. miles the houre in Winter, which is the rest of the yeere, as the wayes and weather afford.

3 And that it may appeare from time to time (as oft as shall be needfull) with what expedition the seruice is by our Postes performed, euery Poste shall keepe a faire paper booke to enter the Pacquets in, being so brought vnto him, with the day, moneth and houre they came to his hands, two leather bagges lined with cotten or bayes, to cary the Pacquet in, and hornes to found, as oft as he meets and sees company comming, or 4. times in euery mile.

4 And to the ende our Postes attending thus our speciall seruice, may performe their seuerall duties in that behalfe, our pleasure is, that they and euery of them shall brooke and enioy the benefit of all former fauours and immunities by our Predecessor allowed them: Namely that they and their seruants be holden free and exempted from all Summons, Prests, and personall attendances at Assises, Sessions, Inquests, and Musters.

## Orders for the Thorough-Postes.

First, as the seruice of the Pacquet, so the horfing of all Thorough-Postes, and persons riding in poste, with horne or guide, by Commission or otherwise, shall be performed by our standing Postes in their seuerall Stages, who to that end shall keepe, and haue in a readinesse vnder their directions a sufficient number of Poste-horses, with saddles, bridles and furniture conuenient: and if it shall fall out, that by the repaire of Ambassadors, or other accidents of seruice, men riding in poste, that is to say, with horne or guide, come so thicke, or in such numbers, that their ordinary prouision will not suffice, then the Constables of the places where they dwell, with the aide and assistance of the chiefe Magistrates there, and the Countreys adioyning, (being required in our name) shall take vp, bring in and supply the Postes with horses and with cariages, where they may be had or hired.

2 And that it be not any way a let or impeachment to the liberty of any man riding on his owne or ordinary affaires, within the Realme at his or their pleasure: it is hereby meant that all Strangers, specially riding with horne or guide by themselves, or in company of our ordinary messengers or Postes for the Lowe Countreys, or France, all Ambassadors, riding or sending in their Princes affaires, and all other whatsoever, riding with horne or guide, shall take and change their horses onely of the Postes of that place, or with his consent and appointment, they taking for each horse after the rate of iij. d. the mile beside the guide groat.

3 And to preuent all aduantages of vnconscionable dealing, by such as keepe horses to hire, in the horfing of strangers beyond the ordinary Stages, to the wronging of our Postes, and iniury of the beast, as the Rider: It is found expedient, and our will and pleasure is, that all Strangers borne, aswell going forth of the Realme, as comming into the same, through our shire of Kent, although it be about their owne and priuate affaires, without horne or guide, shall likewise be horfed by our ordinary Postes from Stage to Stage, or with the Postes knowledge and consent, not taking for each horse about ij. d. ob. the mile.

4 It shall not be lawfull for any so riding in poste, to take and ride away the horse or horses of any man, not hauing first and aforehand fully paid & satisfied the hire, nor ride them further then the next Stage, without the knowledge and consent of the Poste of that Stage, nor charge any horse taken, to ride poste with any male or burden (besides the rider) that exceeds the weight of 30. pound. And if it shall happen, any to disobey these our commandements, and orders, to the manifest wrong of any our Postes, iniury of any owner, or hurt of his beast: the Officers or Magistrates of the place, vpon complaint thereof made, shall stay the party offending, till satisfaction bee made, or sufficient security given to repay the damage. But if it so fall out, that the obstinacie of any heerein offending, require further punishment then the ordinary power of the Magistrate of the place can or may conueniently inflict: Then we require our said Master and Comptroller of the Postes, vpon notice thereof given him, to send for the partie or parties to answere their conrempt before our Priue Counsell.

5 This being in generall our Will and command, for the speedie, safe, and orderly expedition of our publique dispatches and occurrents, aswell in writing for our affaires, as riding in poste, whatsoever besides shall fall out more particularly to the behoofe of our said Posts, or ease of their horses, that in these kind of seruices are most subiect to abuses, our like care is to be specially respected: and to that end we doe hereby eftsoones recommend both the one and the other to the wisdom and protection of our saide Master of the Postes, and the aide of all Magistrates and others that loue the furtherance of our seruice, or regard our safetie or pleasure. Given at our Manour of Greenwich, the 15. day of May, in the seuenth yeere of our Raigne of great Britaine, France and Ireland.

Signed by his Maiestie, and subscribed by Charles Stanhop Knight of the Bath, Lord Stanhop of Harrington, Master and Comptroller generall of his Highnesse Postes.

God saue the King.

Imprinted at London by BONHAM NORTON and JOHN BILL, Printers to the Kings most Excellent Maiestie. 1621.

The Motiue of these Orders.

Security to the State, by preventing Intelligence betweene the ill affected.

And his Maiesties speciall seruice.

What Packets shall run in Poste. From the Court. To the Court.

The Postes to runne from Stage to Stage onely. In Summer after 7. miles the houre, and in Winter after the rate of five.

The Postes to haue bookes of Entries, bagges and hornes.

The Postes exemption and freedom.

The Postes to horfe all riding with horne or guide.

To be assisted by Magistrates, if need require.

No mans freedom being impeached.

Who are to be horfed by the Postes, and at what rate the mile.

Abuses to strangers not riding in poste, how preuented by comming to the Postes.

The rate by the mile.

The hire to be first paid downe.

The horse not to be hired beyond the next Stage.

The Burden of 30. pounds besides the Rider.

The contempt of these Orders to be punished by Magistrates, or the Lords of the Counsell.

The Postes reliefe and care of their horses are specially recommended in these Orders, for his Highnesse better Service.